

THE RADICAL CROSS STITCH GUIDE TO FENCE STITCHING

In collaboration with the realestate4ransom prankster campaign against the rampant land speculation plaguing Melbourne's suburbs, Radical Cross Stitch and the Melbourne Revolutionary Craft Circle invite you to engage in a small piece of community beautification.

The following document contains full instructions on how to cross stitch a dollar sign on your favourite local block of vacant land.

Materials:

- x Red wool – can be obtained from your local op shop, your own craft stash or raid someone else's
- x Time
- x A fence with either diamond or square grid on a block of vacant land
- x A friend or two – 'cause these things are always more fun with mates

Part A: Finger Knitting

Step 1: Tie your wool in a loose loop around your index finger



Step 2: Swing knot around to the back of your index finger then loosely loop wool round your middle finger.

Step 3: Bring wool round the back of your hand and from left to right, wrap over the front of your fingers above the existing loops.





Step 4: Take hold of original loop on your index finger and pull it over the second loop and over your finger and release. You'll need to bend your finger down to get it over easily. The first one might be a bit tight if your original loop wasn't loose enough. Don't worry this is normal and won't happen on the rest of them.

Step 5: Repeat step 4 for the loop on your middle finger. Will look like this when finished.



Step 6: Take hold of loose wool and wrap around your hand counter clockwise, ensuring the new wool sits above the old wool looped on your fingers.

Step 7: Repeat steps 4-6

Step 8: After about 7-10 rounds a 'snake' of knitted wool will be forming behind your hand. Pull on this snake to lengthen and tighten it.

And that's it!

Now time to keep knitting. You'll need about 10 metres for this project. Once you have about 5 metres of knitted wool, cut the wool and tie it round your finger knitting to knot it. Don't worry about this looking too attractive; it'll get chopped off during the fence stitching process.

Stage 2: Fence Stitching

Now these photos aren't as sexy due to the whole night time installation aspect of this kind of thing. Turns out my camera doesn't like taking close shots of bright red wool at night with a flash... But you'll get the drift.

This tutorial is based on a stitch done on a diamond shaped chain link fence. If you've struck gold and found a square grid fence, the directions will be slightly different. I've italicised the extra bits.

Step 1: Figure out where you're going to start. You want your stitching to be nicely centred. Don't rush this process! Count it a couple of times if you need to. Make sure your design has enough room without running into the edge of the fence, or into a broken bit of fence.

Step 2: Tie the end of your wool onto the fence onto the left corner of the diamond *or bottom left corner of the square*. Don't worry about the hanging end bit of wool, you can tidy these all off at the end. But ensure it's tightly secured so it doesn't come off!



Step 3: pull your wool straight across the diamond and through the next diamond. Pass the wool behind and down to the diamond below. Gee that's kinda hard to explain – look at the picture! *For square grids you'll go diagonally up and then down.*

Step 4: pull the wool vertically (*or diagonally*) up, through and behind to the next diamond. In the picture my next diamond was the one up and to the left from my first.



There's your first cross!

Now a brief pause to talk about tension. It's really important to keep all your stitches tight! Firstly because it looks better, secondly because it lasts longer and finally and most importantly because it uses less wool! All that time finger knitting – best to use it efficiently! I usually stop every couple of stitches and give everything another tug to make sure it's nice and tight.



Step 5: repeat steps 3 & 4 for the rest of your pattern. Once you get the hang of it you can start to get a bit clever about using the 'thread' to secure the behind work a bit neater as you go along. You want to keep the behind work as close to the stitches or the wire as possible so it keeps it neater and makes your finished design really clear. There's no clear way to explain how to do this because it all depends on what direction you're going in. It's something you pick up with practice. So the more fence stitching you do the better!

Step 6: When you've finished the pattern, tie your wool off as tight as you can. As with your original knot, make sure it's super secure.

Step 7: Cut off the extra wool. Make sure you leave a couple of centimetres spare just so the wool has a little bit to move before coming undone. Remember your stitching has to brave the elements so it will all move a bit over time.

Step 8: Step back and admire!!

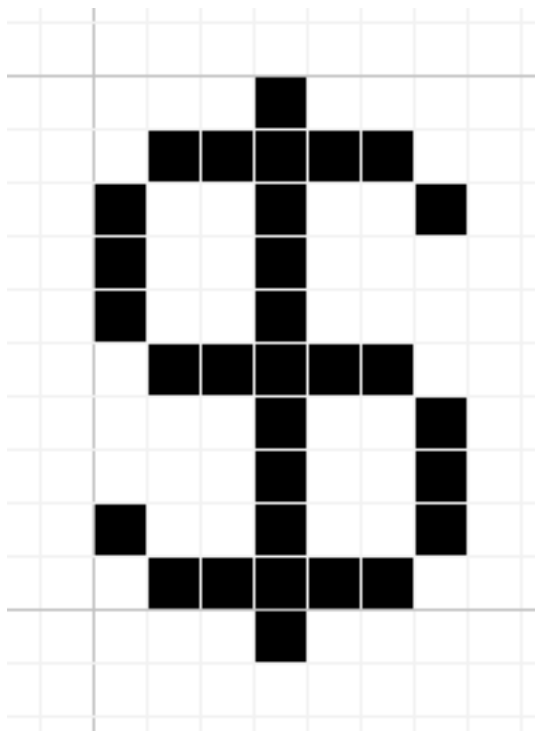
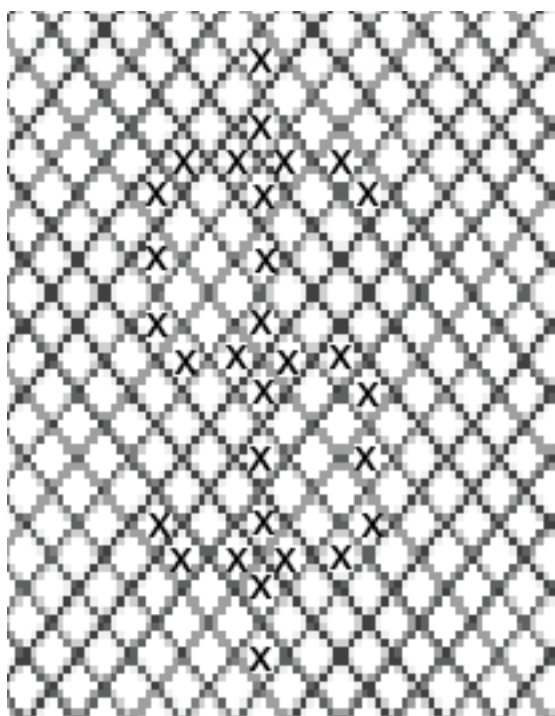
Congratulations you just made one ugly mofo fence, heaps less ugly. And if you've used this pattern – you've also helped educate your community that this wasted block of land that appears to be just collecting weeds and rubbish is also helping line the pockets of some fat cat speculator. These blocks don't just sit there doing nothing – they sit there making money!

The Pattern!

While of course you can use this tutorial to make whatever pattern you want – there's no such thing as a bad fence stitch! – this tutorial has been put together to encourage to get on board with our campaign to highlight the vacant land in our suburbs. Land that is sitting there being ugly when it could be a lovely home – or a nice local business.



Here's the two dollar sign patterns. One for a square grid (these are the easiest to do – but the fences are rarer) and one for the diamond grid.



They're not the best quality image for the diagonal fence sorry... Will work on getting a better one, but it should do the trick for now.